



Speech for the “Instrument for Just Peace” Exhibition and Seminar

- Good evening to the Honorable Minister Victor Dominello, Members of Parliament, His Eminence Metropolitan Archbishop Paul Saliba, His Eminence Grand Mufti of Australia Dr. Ibrahim Abu Mohamed, Your Excellencies, distinguished guests, ladies, and gentlemen
- I would like to begin by sincerely thanking Marcelle for organising this important art exhibition and seminar “instrument for just peace”
- I would also like to thank all of you for being here tonight to support such innovative artwork
- “I believe in the power of poetry, which gives me reasons to look ahead and identify a glint of light” – Mahmoud Darwish
- In the time since we first met, I have grown familiar with Marcelle’s unique artwork—I find her use of “light” to be a metaphor for the creative journey that we must all take towards the attainment of peace
- Equally as impressive as Marcelle’s artwork, is her deep commitment to peace and justice, not only in Palestine, but around the world
 - As an Australian-Palestinian who arrived as a refugee to Australia, Marcelle has overcome the immense pain and suffering of her people’s dispossession and occupation, and has gone on to make a positive impact in the Australian, Palestinian, and global communities
- Through her fantastic artwork, Marcelle shows us a glint of light—she promotes principles such as global justice, peace, reconciliation, and the defence of human rights
- Marcelle does not limit her promotion of these principles to the cause of her people, the Palestinians, but advocates their application on a global scale
- Art, in all of its forms, is an extraordinarily powerful tool for promoting peace, justice, and harmony

- By engaging our senses, art provokes emotional responses and fosters understanding
- Through this emotional understanding comes empathy, which drives us to bridge ideological gaps, bringing about peace and reconciliation
- Political change always begins with the expressions of individuals, so art is essential to the process of achieving concrete political change
- The focus for most Palestinian artists, writers, poets, and filmmakers (both in Palestine and in diasporas) has been on using art as a means of non-violent resistance, seeking peace, reconciliation, and self-determination
- World-renowned Palestinian creatives such as Mahmoud Darwish, Naji Al-Ali, Fadwa Toqan, Mustafa Abu Ali, and Salaiman Mansour (among others) have understood their art as a human experience, supporting the human rights of Palestinians—not least the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination on their homeland
- Other Palestinian artists here in Australia, such as Samah Sabawi and Assad Abdi, have likewise used the power of creativity to identify glints of light for the Palestinian people
- These are examples of the innovative role that the Palestinian community plays in Australia, something that I am extremely proud of
- Their contribution to promoting peace and wholeheartedly defending the principle of justice in Palestine is widely recognised and greatly appreciated
- I would like to thank you all for coming here tonight to celebrate the fantastic work of Marcelle Mansour
- I hope that her work can be recognised for its invaluable contribution to promoting a just peace in Palestine, allowing us to identify a glint of light for the Palestinian people